

**GOVERNOR CUOMO ANNOUNCES PASSAGE OF THE FY 2018 STATE BUDGET**

***2018 State Budget Advances Governor's Middle Class Recovery Act – Investing in Jobs & Infrastructure, Reducing Taxes, and Expanding Access to Education***

***Increases Education Aid to \$25.8 Billion – Largest Investment in the History of the State***

***Spending Growth Held to 2 Percent For Seventh Consecutive Year***

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced the passage of the 2018 State Budget, which builds on the state's fiscal discipline over the last six years while strengthening the middle class, reducing taxes, and making smart investments in New York's future. For the seventh consecutive year, the Budget is balanced and holds spending growth to 2 percent.

With the 2018 Budget, New York leads the nation by making college tuition-free at SUNY and CUNY two- and four-year colleges for working and middle-class families making up to \$125,000 per year. The Budget also corrects a decades-long injustice by raising the age of criminal responsibility, ensuring that 16- and 17-year-olds in New York are processed as juveniles in the state's justice system.

To ensure that current and future New Yorkers have access to clean water, the Budget invests \$2.5 billion in the landmark Clean Water Infrastructure Act. Additionally, the Budget includes new measures to relieve the property tax burden on New Yorkers through innovative county-wide shared services plans.

**About the FY 2018 Budget**

- State Operating Funds spending \$98.1 billion in FY 2018 – an increase of 2 percent. (State Operating Funds exclude Federal funds and capital).
- All Funds spending is \$153.1 billion for FY 2018.
- Increases Education Aid by \$1.1 billion, including a \$700 million increase in Foundation Aid, bringing the new Education Aid total to \$25.8 billion or an increase of 4.4 percent.
- Extends tax rate on millionaires, preserving as much as \$4.5 billion in annual revenue – 45,000 taxpayers impacted, 50 percent non-residents.

- Begins Middle Class Tax Cut – saving taxpayers \$250 on average next year, and 6 million New Yorkers \$700 annually when fully effective.
- Invests \$163 million to make college tuition free for middle-class families at SUNY and CUNY, and an additional \$8 million to increase access to e-books statewide.
- Supports New York’s middle-class families by doubling New York State Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit.
- Raises the Age of criminal responsibility so that 16- and 17-year-olds are no longer prosecuted as adults.
- Supports and expands New York State’s historic \$100 billion infrastructure program.
- Delivers \$2.5 billion in funding to advance the creation or preservation of 100,000 affordable and 6,000 supportive housing units.
- Invests \$2.5 billion in the Clean Water Infrastructure Act.
- Invests \$750 million for the Regional Economic Development Councils Round VII.
- Includes \$70 million for I ♥ New York to promote statewide tourism.

***Statement from Governor Andrew M. Cuomo:***

“With this Budget, New York is once again leading the nation and showing what responsible government can achieve. The result is a Budget that advances the core progressive principles that built New York: investing in the middle class, strengthening the economy and creating opportunity for all.

“This Budget enacts the Middle Class Recovery Act to continue the Empire State’s upward trajectory and creates a path forward for those striving to get ahead. By making college at our world-class public universities tuition-free, we have established a national model for access to higher education, and achieved another New York first.

“For too long, draconian punishments for youthful mistakes have ruined the lives of countless young New Yorkers. By coming together, we reversed this injustice and raised the age of criminal responsibility once and for all so that 16- and 17-year-olds are no longer prosecuted as adults.

“This Budget continues the progress we have achieved to improve the lives of New Yorkers, and build a stronger, better Empire State that truly lives up to its motto: Excelsior.”

**Enacting the Middle Class Recovery Act**

**Reducing Taxes to Record Lows for Middle-Class New Yorkers**

The Budget continues to lower Personal Income Tax rates for middle-class New

Yorkers. With the middle class tax cuts of 2012, rates were lowered from 6.85 percent to 6.45 percent for taxpayers in the \$40,000-\$150,000 income bracket, and to 6.65 percent in the \$150,000-\$300,000 income bracket. Under these new reforms, the rate will drop even further this year and will continue to drop all the way to 5.5 percent and 6 percent, respectively, when the cuts are fully phased in.

These new lower tax rates will save middle class New Yorkers nearly \$6.6 billion in just the first four years, with annual savings reaching \$4.2 billion by 2025. As the new rates phase in, they will be the state's lowest middle class tax rates in more than 70 years. When the tax cuts begin, they will benefit 4.4 million filers, growing to 6 million filers when fully phased in.

### **Cutting Property Taxes and Costs of Local Government**

The FY 2018 Budget continues the Governor's efforts to relieve the property tax burden and builds on the success of the 2 percent property tax cap. The typical New York homeowner pays 2.5 times more in local property taxes than in state income taxes. The Budget will empower citizens to control the cost of local government by requiring counties to assemble local governments to find efficiencies for real, recurring taxpayer savings. To ensure transparency and an active role for citizens in reducing their tax burden, public hearings and input will be required as part of the development of the shared services plans.

### **Doubling the Middle Class Child Care Tax Credit**

The Budget enacts an enhanced middle class child care tax credit that will help more than 200,000 middle-class families make their child care more affordable. The new tax credit would supplement the current New York State Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit and more than double the benefit for families earning between \$60,000 and \$150,000, bringing the total credit from \$169 to \$376 per household on average.

### **Establishing the First-in-the-Nation Excelsior Scholarship Program to Provide Tuition-Free College for Families Making up to \$125,000 & Investing in E-Books**

The Budget enacts the Governor's landmark Excelsior Scholarship program to make college affordable at SUNY and CUNY two- and four-year colleges for working- and middle-class families. The program provides free tuition to families making up to \$125,000 per year, and nearly 940,000 New York families are eligible for the program.

The new initiative will be phased in over three years, beginning for New Yorkers making up to \$100,000 annually in the fall of 2017, increasing to \$110,000 in 2018, and reaching \$125,000 in 2019. The Excelsior Scholarship is a 'last mile' program, which extends the state's existing generous aid programs, including the nearly \$1 billion Tuition Assistance Program and any applicable federal grants, and fills in any remaining

gaps to cover the full cost of tuition.

New Yorkers must be enrolled in college full-time, averaging 30 credits per year and completing their degree on-time. The program includes built in flexibility, allowing students to pause and restart the program, due to a hardship, or take fewer credits one semester than another. Students must also maintain a grade point average necessary for the successful completion of their coursework. Under the program, New Yorkers will be required to live and work in-state for the number of years they received the Excelsior Scholarship. The Budget also includes a generous Maintenance of Effort to assist in meeting the operational needs of SUNY and CUNY.

As the cost of textbooks can be prohibitively expensive, the Budget also invests \$8 million to provide open educational resources, including electronic-books, to students at SUNY and CUNY. At the state's direction, SUNY and CUNY will use this funding to target high-enrollment courses, including general education, to maximize student savings.

Under the FY 2018 Budget, a new Enhanced Tuition Award will also enable students attending private not-for-profit colleges to receive financial assistance to complete their college degree. The program provides a maximum award of \$3,000, requires private colleges to provide a match and freeze student tuition for the duration of the award – maximizing the financial benefit to the student. The Enacted Budget includes \$19 million for the program.

### **Investing Record \$25.8 Billion in Education**

The FY 2018 Budget continues the progress made to strengthen educational outcomes and increase access to high-quality learning across New York State. It increases Education Aid by \$1.1 billion, including a \$700 million increase in Foundation Aid, bringing the new Education Aid total to \$25.8 billion or an increase of 4.4 percent. Under Governor Cuomo, education aid has increased by \$6.2 billion, or 32 percent, over six years.

- **Prekindergarten:** The Budget includes an over \$800 million investment in prekindergarten to expand high-quality half-day and full-day prekindergarten for three- and four-year-old children in high-need school districts.
- **Community Schools:** The Budget provides \$150 million—an increase of \$50 million—to support the continued transformation of high-need schools into community hubs. This funding supports services that are unique to each school's individual needs, including before-and-after school programs, summer learning activities, medical and dental care, and other social services.
- **Empire State After-School Program:** The FY 2018 Budget increases the state's after-school investment with \$35 million in new funding for public after-school programs in the state's 16 Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI) as well as in communities in the state with high rates of child poverty.

This new funding will create an additional 22,000 spots for students in after-school programs.

- **Empire State Excellence in Teaching Awards:** To recognize and honor excellence and innovation in the classroom, the Budget provides \$400,000 to fund a second round of Empire State Excellence in Teaching awards. This funding will be awarded on a regional basis to at least 60 teachers across the state. Awardees will receive \$5,000 to use for professional development activities, including coursework to enhance expertise, attendance at a state or national education conference, or enrollment in a summer institute or certification program.

### **Protecting New Yorkers from the Soaring Cost of Prescription Drugs**

Under the FY 2018 Budget, New York is the first state in the nation to cap the growth of prescription drug spending in its Medicaid program, which has grown 25 percent over the past three years. The Budget provides the Department of Health with a range of tools to lower the cost of prescription drugs, including the ability to drive down the cost of certain drugs whose price is high relative to its therapeutic benefits. The FY 2018 Budget also enables the Medicaid program to allocate more resources for other essential health services and ensure high-quality care across New York State.

### **Delivering on the New York Promise**

#### **Raising the Age of Criminal Responsibility**

The FY 2018 State Budget raises the age of criminal responsibility to 18-years-old and ensures that young people who commit non-violent crimes receive the intervention and evidence-based treatment they need. New York was previously one of only two states in the nation that automatically processed all 16- and 17-year-olds as adults in the criminal justice system, no matter their offense.

The new measures will be phased in over time, raising the age of juvenile delinquency from age 16- to 17-years-old beginning on October 1, 2018, and subsequently raising the age of criminal responsibility to 18-years-old on October 1, 2019.

Further, young people will no longer be permitted to be housed in adult facilities or jails. Young people under the age of eighteen will no longer be placed or held at Rikers Island in New York City no later than October 1, 2018. They are to be placed in specialized juvenile detention facility certified by the New York City Administration for Children's Services and the State's Office of Children and Family Services, and in conjunction with the State's Commission of Correction and the New York City Department of Corrections.

The state will also create a Raise the Age implementation task force, with committee

members designated by the Governor. Additionally, individuals who have been crime free for ten years after serving a sentence will be able to apply for the sealing of previous criminal convictions.

### **Recording Police Interrogations for Serious Offenses and Improving Witness Identification Procedures**

In order to ensure the reliability of evidence and integrity in the criminal justice system, legislation included in the Budget requires law enforcement to video-record custodial interrogations in cases involving serious offenses.

Additionally, the legislation allows the use of photo identifications made by witnesses at trial when the identification procedures were conducted using proper safeguards, such as a 'blind' or 'blinded' administration. This legislation will allow juries the opportunity to consider the most reliable form of identification evidence – those obtained closest in time to a crime.

By improving the integrity of identification procedures and enhancing public safety, the legislation protects against wrongful convictions and ensures criminals are held responsible.

### **Allocating \$10 Million to Liberty Defense Project**

The Budget invests \$10 million to establish the nation's first legal defense fund to ensure all immigrants, regardless of residency status, have access to representation. The initiative is a public-private partnership between the New York Department of State, two dedicated philanthropic allies – the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Ford Foundation – and a statewide coalition of 182 advocacy organizations and legal entities. Private sector law firms, legal departments at universities, bar associations and advocacy organizations will be coordinated by the State's Office for New Americans to provide pro bono legal and additional resources for immigrants threatened by recent changes in immigration policies.

### **Establishing Statewide Hate Crimes Task Force**

The FY 2018 Budget commits \$1 million to establish a statewide Hate Crimes Task Force – assigning members of the State Police, in conjunction with the Division of Human Rights and the Division of Criminal Justice Services – to mitigate recent incidents of bias-motivated threats, harassment, and violence in New York. The Task Force will engage county leaders, district attorneys, school district leaders, local police departments and other key stakeholders to identify and investigate hate motivated crimes and bias related trends, community vulnerabilities and discriminatory practices.

### **Extending Hurrell-Harring Settlement Reforms for Indigent Defendants across New York**

The provision of quality criminal defense by the government to individuals who cannot otherwise afford counsel is of paramount importance, as the United States Supreme Court ruled in *Gideon v. Wainwright*. In 2014, the state successfully negotiated an agreement in *Hurrell-Harring et al. v. State of New York et al.*, a lawsuit filed against the state and five counties based upon an alleged failure to provide the necessary level of indigent defense services in those counties, to bring true reform to public defense systems that were failing.

To ensure fair and equal representation for all accused individuals, the FY 2018 Budget includes resources to develop the framework through which the state will fund one hundred percent of the costs necessary to extend the reforms provided for in the *Hurrell-Harring* settlement to all 62 counties in New York.

### **Delivering \$2.5 Billion in Funding to Combat Homelessness and Increase Access to Affordable Housing**

The FY 2018 Budget continues funding for the state's \$20 billion comprehensive, five-year plan for affordable and supportive housing to ensure New Yorkers who are homeless or at risk of homelessness have safe and secure housing. The Budget includes \$2.5 billion in funding to advance the creation or preservation of 100,000 affordable and 6,000 supportive housing units.

### **Enacting "Affordable New York" Housing Program**

Under the FY 2018 Budget, developers of new residential projects with 300 units or more in certain areas of Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens would be eligible for a full property tax abatement for 35 years if the project creates a specific number of affordable rental units and meets newly established minimum construction wage requirements. The units must remain affordable for 40 years. For all other affordable developments in New York City, the period of affordability and abatement eligibility would be tied to the number of affordable units. This new program will create an estimated 2,500 new units of affordable housing per year.

### **Encouraging Recent College Graduates to Become First-Time Homeowners**

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### **Protecting Runaway and Homeless Youth**

Runaway and homeless youth face a lack of affordable, safe and stable housing. To provide Runaway and Homeless Youth Act programs with increased flexibility so they can improve services, the Budget includes reforms that provide counties with the ability to double the allowable length of stay in short-term RHYA crisis programs to 120 days and extend long-term RHYA transitional and residential independent living programs from 18 to 24 months. The reforms also allow counties to increase the maximum permissible age for young people in long-term RHYA programs to 24-years-old.

### **Expanding Youth Employment Opportunities**

- **Summer Youth Employment Program:** The Budget increases funding for the Summer Youth Employment Program by \$5 million, bringing total funding to \$36 million. In 2016, approximately 18,750 youths were employed through the program.
- **Expanding Employment Opportunities for Youth and Apprentices:** The Budget extends New York Youth Jobs Program with a \$40 million annual allocation over the next five years as well as a \$10 million annual allocation for the Empire State Apprenticeship Tax Credit Program, significantly expanding opportunity throughout the State. Since 2012, this highly successful program has connected 45,000 young adults at nearly 1,700 businesses with stable, well-paying jobs.

### **Additional FY 2018 State Budget Highlights**

#### **Providing Budget Flexibility to React to Potential Loss of Federal Aid**

Given the looming threats from Washington, the FY 2018 Budget provides flexibility for the state to adjust spending during the fiscal year to account for a significant loss of federal aid. If federal support is reduced by \$850 million or more, the New York State Director of the Budget will develop a plan to make uniform spending reductions. This plan would take effect automatically unless the legislature passes their own plan within 90 days.

#### **Delivering Ride Sharing for Upstate New York**

The FY 2018 Budget authorizes Transportation Network Companies, such as Uber and Lyft, to operate across New York and creates uniform licensing standards. The Department of Motor Vehicles will have broad oversight of rideshare companies and will ensure compliance with all laws, rules, and regulations required as part of a TNC's operational license.

TNC companies will be required to maintain minimum insurance coverage levels of \$1.25 million while a TNC driver is traveling to pick up a passenger and until the drop-off is completed. The state will also establish minimum standards to ensure passenger

safety, including mandatory background checks, ongoing monitoring for traffic safety, anti-discrimination protections, and zero-tolerance drug and alcohol policies.

The Budget also establishes a statewide task force to study and deliver recommendations on accessibility needs to protect and provide transportation to vulnerable populations. Necessary workers' compensation coverage will be provided to rideshare drivers through enhancements to the Black Car Fund. Finally, a statewide board will be established to review the impact of this newly authorized industry across the state.

## **Safeguarding New York's Environment for Future Generations**

- **Clean Water Infrastructure Act:** To ensure that current and future New Yorkers have access to clean water, the Budget initiates the \$2.5 billion Clean Water Infrastructure Act. This investment will protect public health, safeguard the environment, and preserve the state's water resources. These funds will help local governments address water emergencies, pay for local infrastructure construction projects, underwrite land acquisition for source water protection, and investigate and mitigate emerging contaminants in drinking water. These projects will improve the quality and safety of municipal drinking water distribution, filtration systems, and wastewater treatment infrastructure.
- **Environmental Protection Fund:** The Budget continues EPF funding at \$300 million, the highest level in the history of the state. Appropriations include \$41 million for solid waste programs, \$86 million for parks and recreation, \$154 million for open space programs, and \$19 million for the climate change mitigation and adaptation programs.
- **NY Parks 2020 Initiative:** Advancing the NY Parks 2020 initiative, which is investing \$900 million to upgrade and repair our State Parks, the Budget allocates \$120 million in New York Works capital funding – an increase of \$30 million from FY 2017. This funding will aid the ongoing transformation of the state's flagship parks and support critical infrastructure projects. The additional \$30 million will target projects that will strategically leverage private funding to improve New York State Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation facilities and services.
- **Adventure NY Program:** DEC will launch the Adventure NY program, which will improve access to State lands, rehabilitate campgrounds, and upgrade DEC recreational facilities. This new initiative will build on existing efforts and includes \$70 million in New York Works capital funding, an increase of \$30 million from FY 2017. This funding will also enable DEC to continue to address critical infrastructure needs, including dam safety and flood control projects.
- **Local Waterfront Revitalization Program:** On our waterfronts, the Department of State Local Waterfront Revitalization Program helps communities re-imagine and revitalize their hidden assets to attract new development opportunities and invigorate new economic growth engines like tourism. The Budget includes amendments to State law that allow Local Waterfront Revitalization matching

funds from the Environmental Protection Fund to be increased from 50 percent to 75 percent for all projects and 85 percent for projects in Environmental Justice communities, affording greater flexibility for applicants to meet the local share for complex neighborhood redevelopment planning projects.

### **Creating Nation's Largest Multi-Use Trail Network: The Empire State Trail**

The FY 2018 State Budget provides \$200 million to complete the Hudson River Valley Greenway and Erie Canalway trails and creates the Empire State Trail, the largest state multi-use trail in the nation. The 750-mile trail will provide new opportunities for hiking and biking along scenic vistas and through charming, historic communities, driving tourism and economic activity across New York. The Empire State Trail will span the state, from the New York Harbor up through the Adirondack Mountains to the Canadian border – and from the shores of Lake Erie along the historic Erie Canal to the heart of the Capital Region.

### **Combating the Opioid Epidemic**

In 2016, the Governor signed into law a comprehensive plan to combat the heroin and opioid epidemic in New York State. The FY 2018 Budget builds on this progress by investing over \$200 million to support prevention, treatment and recovery programs targeted toward chemical dependency, residential service opportunities, and public awareness and education activities.

### **Increasing Direct Care Professional Salaries**

The Enacted Budget will provide New York's 120,000 direct care professionals with a 6.5 percent raise over the next two years. These increases will help state-funded non-profits that specialize in the care of vulnerable New Yorkers not only recruit and retain employees, but continue to provide the same level of excellent care that have made them the backbone of New York's developmentally disabled and behavioral health system.

### **Enacting Comprehensive Workers' Compensation Reform**

The Budget includes meaningful workers' compensation reforms that provide cost savings for businesses and better protections for injured workers. The new reforms ensure that the most significantly injured workers have the right to be considered for lifetime benefits. Reforms also ensure swift access to hearings for injured workers not receiving benefits, create a clear formulary for prescription drugs, and provide relief for first responders exposed to a traumatic event at work. Concurrent with expanded worker protections, businesses will be achieving overall savings, bringing much needed relief to municipal and private employers. Changes include establishing more definitive limits on caps and updating medical guidelines to reflect advances in modern medicine.

## **Providing Funding for Essential Health Care Providers**

The Budget provides \$500 million in additional capital support for essential health care providers, including a minimum of \$75 million directed to community-based providers, to support capital projects and other initiatives that facilitate health care transformation. Included in this amount is \$50 million that is directed to Montefiore Medical Center to expand the availability of affordable healthcare. This investment will bring the total amount of capital support provided to health care providers for transformation efforts to \$3.3 billion over 4 years.

## **Creating New Independent Inspector General of New York for Transportation**

The Budget includes measures to establish a new Office of Inspector General of New York for Transportation that would be responsible for investigating and prosecuting any criminal and unethical actions as it pertains to senior level officers and employees of transportation entities. A Transportation entity is defined as a public entity located within a city of a population of one million or more involved in the transportation of persons, goods or other items within or to and from the state where at least one individual involved at a senior level in operations, financing or management of such entity is appointed by the Governor. In addition to investigatory and prosecutorial powers, this new Inspector General may refer any findings to another investigatory or prosecutorial body, as well as prepare and release public reports related to its findings.

## **Reprivatizing the New York Racing Association**

The Budget re-establishes a privately controlled board of directors for NYRA, a culmination of the Governor's multi-year effort to ensure horse racing in New York is competently managed, accountable, and transparent. The new board will have 17 members: the CEO, eight executive committee members, and two individuals each appointed by the Governor, the Senate and the Assembly. Breeders and horsemen each will have a member. The proposal also increases oversight by enhancing the powers of the Franchise Oversight Board, which will help safeguard the accomplishments of transitional board.

## **Driving Economic Growth and Revitalizing New York's Infrastructure**

The 2018 Budget continues to deliver on the Governor's historic commitment to revitalize New York State's infrastructure, and in partnership with public authorities, and local and federal governments, the state is investing \$100 billion in transformative projects across New York.

- **Downtown Revitalization Initiative Round II:** The FY 2018 State Budget includes \$100 million for Round II of the successful Downtown Revitalization Initiative. The Initiative was created last year to support transformative housing, economic development, transportation, and community projects to attract and

retain residents, visitors, and businesses to downtowns. The first round awarded \$100 million last year to ten communities that are currently experiencing population loss or economic decline to develop revitalization plans for their downtown area, developed in collaboration with policy and planning experts.

- **Life Sciences Investment:** The FY 2018 Budget invests \$620 million to grow a new, world-class life science research cluster in New York and expand the state's ability to commercialize research and grow the economy.
- **Regional Economic Development Councils:** Since 2011 the REDCs have awarded nearly \$4.6 billion in state funding to over 5,200 projects through a competitive process to spur job creation based on regional priorities. Projects receiving funding through the REDC initiative are expected to create and retain 210,000 jobs in New York. The Budget includes \$750 million in core capital and tax-credit funding that will be combined with a wide range of existing agency programs for REDC Round VII.
- **I ♥ New York Welcome Centers:** Modeled after the successful Long Island Welcome Center, the state will establish welcome centers – one in each region of the state – that feature an array of experiences including Taste NY, Path Through History, I ♥ New York and State Parks that highlight each region's tourism assets.
- **JFK Transformation:** The FY 2018 State Budget invests \$564 million to reconfigure the Grand Central/Van Wyck interchange and the Van Wyck itself, saving motorists a combined travel time of 7.4 million hours annually going to and from JFK. The transformation of this vital artery is an essential component of the Port Authority's JFK Master Plan, which is reimaging JFK International Airport for the next century of growth and provides the impetus for private sector investment, driving the total investment potential as high as \$10 billion.
- **Bruckner-Sheridan Interchange Reconstruction:** The FY 2018 State Budget transforms the South Bronx by investing \$700 million toward the \$1.8 billion plan to realize the long-sought reconstruction of the Bruckner-Sheridan Interchange.
- **Moynihan Train Hall at the New Penn-Farley Complex:** The FY 2018 State Budget commits \$700 million to advance Governor Cuomo's sweeping plans to transform the historic James A. Farley Post Office into a world-class transportation hub. The Moynihan Train Hall will have more space than Grand Central's main concourse, housing both Amtrak and LIRR ticketing and waiting areas, along with state-of-the-art security features and a modern, digital passenger experience. The train hall will also feature 112,000 square feet of retail space and over 500,000 square feet of office space and connect to the new MTA LIRR Concourse connecting Penn Station to Moynihan Train Hall. The Budget makes a multi-year commitment totaling \$700 million to support this development.
- **Kosciuszko Bridge Replacement:** The FY 2018 State Budget invests \$270 million to construct the Kosciuszko Bridge Phase II, which is a new westbound (Brooklyn-bound) main span. The State is replacing the 77-year-old bridge with two new state-of-the-art bridges, one Queens-bound and one Brooklyn-bound.
- **\$1.4 Billion for Vital Brooklyn:** The Budget advances the \$1.4 billion Vital Brooklyn initiative. Under the Governor's plan, the State is targeting and investing

in eight integrated areas, establishing a national paradigm for addressing chronic disparities, like systemic violence and entrenched poverty in high-need communities. The comprehensive plan includes a focus on increasing access to open spaces and healthy food and create a stronger, more sustainable Central Brooklyn by prioritizing strategic investments in resiliency and affordable housing, as well as job creation, youth development, and community violence prevention.

- **Buffalo Billion Phase II:** The Budget allocates \$500 million for the Buffalo Billion Phase II, building on the success of the past six years of development with a focus on revitalization and smart growth efforts, improvements to workforce development and job training, growing advanced manufacturing, tourism and life sciences, and connecting communities to foster growth through rail expansion.
- **State Fair Modernization:** The Budget also provides \$70 million in capital funding to continue modernizing the State Fair, which saw record attendance levels in 2016. Phase Two includes \$50 million to continue building the *new* New York State Fairgrounds and \$20 million to construct a new on-ramp to I-690 West and other improvements to the State Fairgrounds' Orange parking lot.
- **Town of Woodbury Transit and Economic Development Hub:** The Budget supports the acceleration of the \$150 million reconstruction project to build the Town of Woodbury Transit and Economic Development Hub. The project, which will create nearly 600 jobs, will overhaul a highly congested corridor that feeds the Woodbury Common Premium Outlets, a regional economic engine.
- **Eliminate the Cap on Industrial Hemp:** The FY 2018 State Budget eliminates the cap on New York's burgeoning industrial hemp industry, authorizing farmers to research, grow and process hemp as an agricultural commodity. To accelerate the industry's growth, the state will host the first-ever Industrial Hemp Summit in the Southern Tier – bringing manufacturers, farmers, researchers and other stakeholders together to identify challenges and opportunities to grow the industry and boost the agricultural economy throughout the state.
- **Photonics Venture Challenge in Rochester:** New York State will establish a \$10 million, multi-year Photonics Venture Challenge in Rochester. This business competition aims to support start-up companies that commercialize these rapidly developing technologies through a business accelerator program. It includes a top award of \$1 million to the most promising start-up company. There are currently no accelerator programs in the world with a photonics focus and the Rochester region is uniquely positioned to build a nationally recognized program.
- **\$120 million to Strengthen the LIRR:** An investment of \$80 million will be made to enhance 16 Long Island Rail Road stations. These improvements will optimize system connectivity and enhance the overall passenger experience. The Budget also includes \$20 million to develop a direct LIRR connection to MacArthur Airport. Additionally, the Budget includes \$20 million to build a stop on the LIRR Ronkonkoma Branch at the center of Long Island's innovation corridor at Brookhaven National Laboratory.
- **Extreme Weather Hardening of the Nassau Expressway:** The Budget includes an additional \$130 million in new transportation funding to accelerate the reconstruction and elevation of a segment of the Nassau Expressway (Route 878) in Nassau County. The planned work will mitigate flooding and improve

existing drainage, enhancing the safety and reliability of this busy stretch of road that carries 56,000 vehicles each day and serves as an Emergency Storm Evacuation Route for more than 400,000 people.

- **Upstate Airport Economic Development and Revitalization Competition:** In FY 2017, the Governor established the \$200 million Upstate Economic Development and Revitalization Competition. In Round II, Plattsburgh International Airport will receive \$38.1 million to jumpstart the airport's \$43 million overhaul and Syracuse Hancock International Airport will receive \$35.8 million towards their \$48.8 million transformation. The bold plans and designs developed by these airports will enhance safety, improve operations and access, reduce environmental impact, and create a better passenger experience.
- **Amtrak Station in Schenectady Construction:** The Budget includes \$15 million for the construction of a new passenger rail station, and improving the parking, lighting and landscaping, as well as the walkways leading to the Bus Rapid Transit areas on State Street and the new parking area on Liberty Street.
- **Master Plan to Redevelop Frontier Town into the "Gateway to the Adirondacks" at Northway Exit 29 in North Hudson:** The FY 2018 State Budget includes funding for the \$32 million public private partnership to create a world-class tourism destination at the site of Frontier Town in the Adirondacks. The [Master Plan](#) for the Gateway to the Adirondacks includes:
  - A DEC campground and day use area along the Schroon River
  - Equestrian camping and trail riding area
  - Visitor Information Center to introduce visitors to the world class recreation destinations in the Adirondack Park
  - Event center with tourist accommodations
  - Interactive exhibits in historic structures highlighting the past, present, and future of the Adirondack forest products and local food industries
- **Olympic Regional Development Authority Capital Improvements:** The FY 2018 Budget includes \$28 million in new capital funding to transform ORDA facilities. This includes \$20 million enhance the current facilities at Gore and Whiteface Mountains, as well as \$8 million in upgrades at Belleayre Mountain Ski Center, to create state-of-the art skiing, lodging, dining and retail opportunities and year-round activities.
- **\$300 Million for Utica Hospital:** New York State is investing \$300 million to build a modern and efficient hospital in downtown Utica.
- **Upgrades to Drinking Water Systems in Owasco and Auburn:** The FY 2018 Budget includes \$2 million toward the design, engineering, and construction of upgrades to the drinking water treatment systems in the City of Auburn and Town of Owasco. Both systems draw water from Owasco Lake, which recently has been impaired by cyanotoxins produced by harmful blue-green algae blooms.

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